

Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, January 4, 1792, from the Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES D. S. MSS.

Philadelphia January 4, 1792.

Sir, —Having been in Conversation today with Monsr. Payan, one of the St. Domingo deputies, I took occasion to inquire of him the footing on which our commerce there stands at present, and particularly whether the colonial *Arret* of 1789, permitting a free importation of our Flour till 1793, was still in force. He answered that, that *Arret* was revoked in France on the clamours of the merchants there: and that a like permission to carry Flour to the three usual ports, and he thinks to bring away Coffee and Sugar, was immediately renewed by the Governor. Whether this has been regularly kept up by renewed *Arrets* during the present troubles he cannot say, but is sure that in practice it has never been discontinued, and that not by contraband, but openly and legally, as is understood. The public application to us to send Flour there is a proof of it. Instead therefore of resting this permission on a colonial *Arret* till 1793, it should be rested on temporary *Arrets* renewed from time to time as heretofore. This correction of the notes I took the liberty of laying before you, with the table containing a comparative view of our commerce with France and England, I thought it my duty to make.